

DIG ART!

CULTIVATING CREATIVITY
IN THE GARDEN



Printmaking: Chlorophyll Prints

Overview Students will extract chlorophyll from a plant part and create a beautiful chlorophyll print.

Objectives Students will:

- engage in the science concepts behind photosynthesis and chlorophyll
- extract the chlorophyll from a plant and create a print with it

Time 1-1.5 hours

Materials

- green leaves (vegetables like kale and spinach, herbs like basil and mint, green leaves from trees and shrubs)
- pieces of white fabric or watercolor paper
- metal spoons
- masking tape



Instructions

1. Review concepts of photosynthesis and chlorophyll with your students. Light is a form of energy. Plants need energy to develop and grow. Humans and animals get their energy from plants. Plants get their energy from the sun, which works to combine water and carbon dioxide to produce sugar. Plants contain chlorophyll, a green pigment that traps the sun's energy. Plants use the sun's energy to combine water and carbon dioxide together to make sugar. Every green part of a plant has chlorophyll and makes sugar.
2. Fold a piece of paper or fabric in half and open it up again. Place a leaf face down on half of the paper/fabric, and fold the other half over it. Tape the paper/fabric to the table so that it stays in one place.
3. Use the bottom of a spoon to press firmly and rub it across the paper/fabric.
4. Rub the spoon over the entire leaf area so that all of the leaf's chlorophyll will be transferred to paper or fabric. The chlorophyll print will be more prominent on the paper because it is thinner and will absorb the chlorophyll more easily than fabric.

5. Repeat this process as many times as you like, trying different leaves and paper or fabric materials.

**Taking it
Further**

Bind the finished prints together in a garden journal or class book, laminate and frame, or hang them as special flags around the classroom.



gardening.cornell.edu



Cornell University
Cooperative Extension